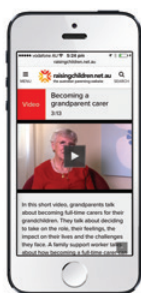


# Supporting grandparent and kinship carers: a guide for service providers





**raisingchildren.net.au** offers free parenting videos, apps and articles backed by Australian experts. The website provides reliable and trusted information about pregnancy; child and teenage health, development, sleep, behaviour, nutrition, physical activity and safety; family relationships; disability; autism spectrum disorder; and services and support for parents and carers.



# Supporting grandparent and kinship carers: a guide for service providers

This guide is for service providers who support or have contact with grandparent and kinship carers with primary responsibility for looking after children.

The guide describes key issues and challenges for grandparent and kinship carers. It includes essential information for service providers and offers practical suggestions for supporting carers at different stages in their caring roles.

**This guide covers the following topics:**

- 🍷 Understanding grandparent and kinship care
- 🍷 Helping grandparent and kinship carers get organised
- 🍷 Support and services for grandparent and kinship carers
- 🍷 Ongoing support for grandparent and kinship carers
- 🍷 Reliable information for grandparent and kinship carers
- 🍷 Useful phone numbers and contacts for carers and service providers



# Understanding grandparent and kinship care

## About grandparent and kinship care

When children can't live with their parents, people in the family or family friends might become their primary carers. This is called grandparent or kinship care.

Grandparent and kinship care is very important for lots of reasons. For children who can't live with their parents, grandparent or kinship care can be a more stable type of care.

But grandparent and kinship care is a major change for children and carers. When people become grandparent and kinship carers, they have a lot to learn about arrangements and support for children in their care. They need understanding and support to care for the children who come to live with them.

## Becoming a grandparent or kinship carer

Becoming a grandparent or kinship carer can be a big change and a big shock.

Sometimes carers might not have known that there was a problem in the child's family. And they might not know how long they'll be caring for the child.

Accepting this change can take time. Grandparent and kinship carers might find it helps to talk to family, friends or a counsellor about the change.

Becoming a grandparent or kinship carer can be a time of very mixed feelings too. Carers might feel:

- angry and ashamed at being placed in this situation
- guilty because they think that they're somehow to blame
- sad about the loss of plans for travel or time for themselves
- uncertain about the future
- disappointed at the loss of some friendships because the child takes priority
- overwhelmed by how much information and responsibility they have to cope with
- worried they won't be able to manage the child, particularly if the child has some developmental delay or challenging behaviour.





I've watched them growing up and now  
I can't imagine my life without them.



## Benefits of being a grandparent or kinship carer

Grandparent and kinship carers say that there are many benefits and joys to raising children, including the chance to:

- be close to children as they grow – ‘I’ve watched them growing up and now I can’t imagine my life without them’
- feel reassured and confident that children are emotionally and physically safe, happy and cared for – ‘I think the main benefit for the grandchildren is the security and stability that they get’
- find a new lease on life – ‘They keep you younger because you’ve got to be more active and organised’.

## Challenges of being a grandparent or kinship carer

Being a grandparent or kinship carer can be challenging:

- It can be stressful to suddenly take children into your home. Sometimes it can cause tension and conflict among family members.
- The relationship with the parent of the child might be very difficult and challenging. This can be a source of conflict, worry and distress for grandparents and kinship carers.
- Sometimes grandparents and kinship carers are also caring for the parent of a child, as well as for the child. For example, a grandparent carer might be caring for his daughter as well as his grandchild. Or a kinship carer might be looking after her brother and his children. This sometimes makes family relationships even more strained.
- Legal arrangements might mean a carer has the care of a child but isn’t allowed to make important decisions. Carers might need to go to their state or territory child protection authorities or Family Courts.
- The family crisis that led to the child coming to live with a carer can cause continuing problems for the child, who might need further support or therapy.
- Carers might find they’re spending their savings or retirement funds on raising children. Costs can be high, especially if the child has additional needs.
- Finding information might be difficult and confusing. Carers might not have much experience using email or the internet.
- Some carers might have their own health and mobility issues, or they might have a partner with health issues.



**Grandparent,  
and kinship carers  
say that there are  
many benefits and joys  
to raising children.**

### **Children in grandparent or kinship care**

Children who come to live with grandparent or kinship carers have experienced a major change in their lives, often as the result of a traumatic experience. These children have not only been separated from their parents, but they might also have had to move house, change schools, leave friends or separate from loved pets.

It's normal for these children to feel angry, sad and worried. They might show their feelings in ways like withdrawal, behaviour problems, difficulty separating from their carers, or clinginess. They can find it hard to:

- feel safe
- sleep soundly
- trust others, make friends and develop social skills
- calm themselves down, manage emotions and regulate behaviour
- learn at school.

All children need to build a relationship with an adult they can trust. This can take time and a lot of patience for children going into care. But as they develop this relationship with their carers and settle into their new homes, some of these issues might go away by themselves.

If carers are worried about the children in their care, they can talk to their GPs about referrals to child psychologists.



## Types of grandparent and kinship care arrangements

There are three main types of grandparent or kinship care.

1

**An informal arrangement** is when there is an agreement with the child's family about caring for the child, without a court order like a child protection order or a family law order. These arrangements are often verbal. The child's parents are still the legal guardians so they have parental responsibility. Under an informal agreement, there are limits to the decisions a grandparent or kinship carer can make without parental consent.

2

**An informal arrangement plus a family law order** is an order from the Family Court. It lists who has parental responsibility for the child – for example, a grandparent or kinship carer – and who can give some security about the caring arrangement. The Court can determine who has custody and guardianship of the child, who the child will live with and who can have contact. A family law order is usually made when the family can't agree on the best custody and contact arrangements for the child.

3

**A formal arrangement with a child protection order** is when a child protection order is made by the state or territory Child Protection Court. A child protection order is used when there's been a report to the child protection authority about a child's safety and wellbeing. The Court determines who has parental responsibility and for how long. A grandparent or kinship carer can apply for full or shared parental responsibility. This arrangement gives the grandparent or kinship carer formal carer status, like foster carers have.

## Child protection laws

Australia has national, state and territory laws about the care and protection of children.

*The Family Law Act 1975* states that children's best interests are the main consideration in decisions about where children live and who cares for them. State and territory child protection agencies support families to look after their children. If agencies are concerned about children's safety or wellbeing, they might remove children from their parents.

Grandparents and other family or friends are often involved in decisions about children.





I think the main benefit for the grandchildren is the security and stability that they get.



## Helping grandparent and kinship carers get organised

For new grandparent and kinship carers, there's a lot to organise. It can be hard for them to know where to start. If children have been placed with them by a state or territory child protection authority, there'll be a case worker to help. If it's a private arrangement they might be working things out on their own.

**Here are some practical things that you can help carers with or remind them to do.**

### Carer rights and responsibilities

If grandparent and kinship carers don't have court-granted guardianship, it can be hard for them to do basic things like give consent for services, get access to children's health records, or give permission for school excursions.

In most states and territories, carers can sign an Informal Caregivers Statutory Declaration. This shows they have primary responsibility for a child's care. They can get the Declaration form from local government offices, community legal centres, Health Services Commissioners, Disability Services Commissioners, education departments and family support agencies.

Carers can get help understanding their rights and responsibilities by calling a community legal service or the legal aid commission or service in their state or territory.

### Health check-ups

When children come into care, it's a good idea for grandparent and kinship carers to organise health check-ups with their GPs. This can identify any health issues that need attention – for example, immunisation, dental health, trauma counselling, speech development and so on.

If children are enrolled in Medicare, carers can claim for medical treatment even if they don't have a child's Medicare card. They can phone Medicare on 1300 660 035 or ask their GPs about what to do.



**It can be hard  
to know where to start.  
But help is available  
through a number of  
government and  
non-government agencies.**



### **Clothing and equipment**

Grandparent and kinship carers might need to buy new clothes, school uniforms, car seats or other furniture like beds and desks. Local support agencies can help with new or used clothing, furniture and payments for families in need. Carers could start with the local Vinnies or Salvation Army store.

### **Child care and school**

If grandparent and kinship carers are still working or need a break each week, they might consider child care. Child care services often have long waiting lists so it's important to register as soon as possible. Some family day carers do overnight stays or weekend care.

School-age children need to be enrolled at school. It's best for carers to make an appointment with the child care director or school principal to discuss the situation and children's needs.

Getting to know staff at the child care centre or school can be the start of a good relationship. And this can help children do well in early childhood education or at school.



## Family routines and rules

It might help grandparent and kinship carers to know that children who come to live with them will need time to get used to the new situation. It's normal for things to be tense for a while.

Family routines, rules and boundaries help children feel safe and secure, and feeling safe can help children adjust to their situation.

To help children feel safe and secure, carers could:

- set up bedrooms and places for children's belongings
- work out regular daily routines for getting up, getting to school, doing homework or after-school activities, having dinner and going to bed
- encourage good behaviour by setting fair rules and boundaries that are appropriate to children's ages
- give children lots of hugs, praise and encouragement when they behave well.

Routines are also good for adults because they can help adults get daily tasks done and feel more organised. This can lower adult stress.

## Paperwork

Grandparent and kinship carers can often feel overwhelmed by how much information they have to cope with and how many people they have to talk to, especially in the early days of care.

Getting paperwork organised can help carers keep track of things. They could keep an exercise book, folder, diary or computer file where they write down:

- who they spoke to
- when they spoke to them
- what they spoke about.

It's a good idea for carers to keep copies of all documents and letters related to their children or the care arrangement.

If carers are struggling with paperwork, you could ask whether they have friends or family members who could help them get organised.



Family routines, rules and boundaries help children feel safe and secure, and feeling safe can help children adjust to their situation.





## Support and services for grandparent and kinship carers

You might need to remind grandparent and kinship carers that case workers, courts, schools, doctors and other services are there to help - and it's OK for carers to ask for help.

### Australian Government Department of Human Services Grandparent Advisers

To get information about services and support, grandparent and kinship carers should start by calling the Department of Human Services Grandparent Adviser Line on **1800 245 965** (callers with hearing or speech impairment can call 1800 810 586).

Grandparent Advisers can:

- give grandparent and kinship carers information about payments and support services
- arrange appointments with specialist staff including social workers
- refer carers to community service providers in their local area.

### Support for carers

If grandparent and kinship carers need help with raising the children in their care, they can call the parenting helpline in their state or territory. Find a list of helpline numbers in the last section of this Guide.

If carers need help with personal issues, it's a good idea for them to talk to their GPs. If they need to speak to someone urgently, they can call Lifeline on 131 114, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### Support for children

Most states and territories have organisations that support children who can't live with their parents. These organisations hold events where children can meet others who are in the same situation. See the last section of this Guide for a list of state and territory organisations that support grandparent and kinship carers and the children in their care.

## Early intervention services

Early intervention means doing things as early as possible to work on any additional needs for children or their families. Early intervention might include special education, speech or occupational therapy, counselling, service planning and help accessing services like kindergarten and child care.

Many children in grandparent or kinship care need early intervention services. This is because they have often been exposed to trauma or neglect that can delay their development.

In most cases children need formal assessments to check what areas are delayed. If this hasn't happened, or grandparent and kinship carers aren't sure whether it has happened, carers should take children to their GPs or child and family health nurses.

These professionals can make an initial assessment and identify needs.

## Legal services

Working through legal issues related to the care of children can take a lot of time and money. For information on legal support, grandparent and kinship carers can call the Family Relationships Advice Line on 1800 050 321 or contact their state or territory legal aid commission or service (phone numbers included at the end of this Guide).

## Financial support and services

If carers are suffering financial stress, there are support options that can help:

- They might be able to apply for child support from the child's parents – phone the Australian Government Department of Human Services on 131 272.
- They can call the national Financial Counselling Helpline on 1800 007 007 for help with financial problems, managing debt and making informed choices about money.
- They can call the Australian Government Financial Information Service on 132 300 for information and advice on financial matters.

Other options include talking to child care centre directors or school principals about how centres or schools can help with education expenses. For example, some schools might provide fee discounts for children in grandparent or kinship care. Organisations like the Smith Family and the Dame Roma Mitchell Trust Fund can provide some help with school fees and equipment.



## Ongoing support for grandparent and kinship carers

Even if grandparent and kinship carers have been caring for children for some time, they still need information and support.

If their situation changes – for example, because of retirement or illness – they should contact Centrelink for information about government payments. At times they might also need help if there's an issue with a child's parent that needs mediation or advice.

### Taking care of themselves

For grandparent and kinship carers, taking care of themselves is an important part of their caring roles. It's very hard for grandparent and kinship carers to find time for their own care, but when they take care of themselves they're more likely to stay fit and well. This means they're better able to deal with life's ups and downs.

Here are some things you could suggest to help carers take care of themselves:

- Take some time for themselves, even if it's just 15 minutes each day doing something they enjoy – reading, going for a walk, working in the garden.
- Make time for regular activities. Carers can look into child care if they need to.
- Get reliable information about parenting and raising children from [raisingchildren.net.au](http://raisingchildren.net.au). This can help carers feel more confident about stepping back into a caring role.
- Ask for help. Friends, family, local community organisations, schools, agencies and local services can all help. Sometimes carers might need help with little things like babysitting while they do the grocery shopping. Other times they might need help with bigger things like getting their children in to counselling.

### Getting support

It's a good idea to remind grandparent and kinship carers that it's OK for them to ask for help, even if they've been carers for a while. You might need to give carers the Australian Government Department of Human Services Grandparent Adviser number again – **1800 245 965** (or 1800 810 586 for callers with hearing or speech impairment).

**For grandparent and kinship carers, taking care of themselves is an important part of their caring role.**



### **Taking a break**

Grandparent and kinship carers can get different kinds of respite. For example, they might be able to ask family or friends to care for children so they can have a weekend away. If children have been put into care by child protection authorities, case workers can organise respite care.

### **Joining a support group**

There are support groups for grandparent and kinship carers all over Australia. The Australian Government Department of Human Services Grandparent Adviser Line on **1800 245 965** should be able to tell carers about groups in their area.

Support groups can also be found by searching the Raising Children Network My Neighbourhood tool at [raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood](https://raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood)

Being part of a grandparent or kinship carer group has lots of benefits. Carers can:

- learn about the services available to them and their children
- get lots of useful information about being a carer and helping children
- feel less isolated, and more connected and understood
- get advice, share experiences and hear from others who have had similar experiences
- make new friends with other people in the same situation.

If there's a child protection order, carers can also contact the foster care association in their state or territory. Sometimes, these associations can also help carers who have the care of a child without a child protection order.



# Reliable information for grandparent or kinship carers

Grandparent and kinship carers can go to **raisingchildren.net** au for service contacts and reliable, up-to-date information on a comprehensive range of topics related to raising babies, children and teenagers and looking after themselves.

Topics include:

- behaviour – for example, tantrums, difficult behaviour, lies, sharing, discipline
- communication – for example, bonding with babies, talking and listening with children of all ages, negotiating with teenagers, conflict management, problem-solving
- development – for example, toilet training, self-esteem, what to expect at different ages, social and emotional development in adolescence, puberty
- health – for example, common childhood and teenage ailments, trauma in children
- nutrition and healthy lifestyle – for example, healthy food choices, fussy eating, physical activity, alcohol and other drugs
- play and learning – for example, play ideas, reading, literacy and numeracy, screen time, preschool, primary school, high school, bullying
- safety – for example, safe sleeping, home safety, car and pedestrian safety, internet safety
- sleep – for example, baby sleep problems, children's sleep routines, teenage sleep changes
- family life – for example, family routines, chores, pocket money
- grandparent and kinship carers – for example, law and money, services, friendships, taking care of yourself
- disability – for example, early intervention and therapies, disability services, anti-discrimination law, school support, National Disability Insurance Scheme
- services – multicultural, mental health, legal and financial, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, government, parent and family, child health, teenage, and drug and alcohol services.



# Grandparent and kinship care: in pictures

## Being a kinship carer or grandparent carer



Grandparent or kinship care is when a child can't live with his parents. A responsible relative or friend cares for him instead.



Being a carer can be good for you and the child. You can give the child a safe and loving home to grow up in.



Becoming a grandparent or kinship carer is a big change. But you aren't alone, and you can get lots of help.

## Support groups for grandparent and kinship carers



Support groups for grandparent or kinship carers get you together with people in the same situation as you.



If you know other carers, you could start your own support group, just to talk and share experiences.



Your grandparent adviser or community centre can help you join or start a support group.

## Looking after yourself as a grandparent or kinship carer



Remember to look after yourself. When you're well and happy, you're in good shape to care for a child.



Try to get enough sleep, do some exercise and eat well. Time for yourself each day is good too.



Talk to an adviser, friends or family. **Call the Grandparent Adviser Line on 1800 245 965.**



# Useful phone numbers and contacts for carers and service providers

## National

**Australian Government Department of Human Services Centrelink Indigenous phone service – [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/centrelink-indigenous-phone-service](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/centrelink-indigenous-phone-service) or 1800 136 380**

This telephone service provides information for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Centrelink clients about specific Centrelink payments and services.

**Australian Government Department of Human Services Grandparent Adviser Line – [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/grandparent-advisers](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/grandparent-advisers) or 1800 245 965 (callers with hearing or speech impairment can call 1800 810 586)**

This telephone service provides support for grandparent and kinship carers, including information about payments, support services and referrals.

**Australian Government Department of Human Services Centrelink Multilingual phone service – [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/multilingual-phone-service](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/multilingual-phone-service) or 131 202**

This telephone service provides information in different languages about payments and services for Centrelink clients.

**Australian Government Department of Human Services Support for non-parent carers – [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/support-non-parent-carers](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/support-non-parent-carers)**

This webpage has information about payments and services for grandparents, legal guardians and other family members who provide full-time care for children.

**Beyond Blue – [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) or 1300 224 636**

Beyond Blue provides information on depression, anxiety and related disorders. It also has information about treatment and referrals to relevant services.

**CREATE Foundation – [www.create.org.au](http://www.create.org.au) or 1800 655 105**

CREATE Foundation represents children and young people who are in out-of-home-care, including children in kinship or grandparent care. It also provides programs and services to help these children.

**Family Relationships Advice Line – [www.familyrelationships.gov.au](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au) or 1800 050 321**

This telephone service helps families affected by relationship or separation issues.

**Kids Helpline – [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au) or 1800 551 800**

This is a free telephone, email and web counselling service for young people aged 5-25 years.

**Raising Children Network grandparent and kinship carer online forum – [raisingchildren.net.au/carerforum](http://raisingchildren.net.au/carerforum)**

Grandparent and kinship carers can use this forum to share stories and ideas with other people in similar situations.

**Raising Children Network My Neighbourhood – [raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood](http://raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood)**

This online tool helps users find grandparent and kinship care groups or other useful services in local areas.

## **Australian Capital Territory**

**ACT Child and Youth Protection Services – [www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/child-and-youth-protection-services](http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/child-and-youth-protection-services) or – 1300 556 729**

This is the Australian Capital Territory's statutory child protection agency. It coordinates government services for children and young people believed to be at risk of harm or abuse.

**Barnardos Australia – [www.barnardos.org.au/what-we-do/foster-care-kinship-care-adoption/kinship-care](http://www.barnardos.org.au/what-we-do/foster-care-kinship-care-adoption/kinship-care) or 1800 066 757**

This child protection service provides support and services to children who can't live with their parents because of abuse or neglect. It also supports kinship carers.

**Legal Aid ACT – [www.legalaidact.org.au](http://www.legalaidact.org.au) or 1300 654 314**

Legal Aid ACT helps people in the ACT with legal problems, especially people who are socially or economically disadvantaged.

**Marymead – [www.marymead.org.au/services/grandparents-group](http://www.marymead.org.au/services/grandparents-group) or (02) 6162 5800**

This organisation supports grandparents raising grandchildren. It offers information and runs group meetings.

**Parentline ACT – [www.parentlineact.org.au](http://www.parentlineact.org.au) or (02) 6287 3833**

Parentline provides telephone counselling by trained volunteers for parents and carers.



## New South Wales

**Barnardos Australia – [www.barnardos.org.au/what-we-do/foster-care-kinship-care-adoption/kinship-care](http://www.barnardos.org.au/what-we-do/foster-care-kinship-care-adoption/kinship-care) or 1800 066 757**

This child protection service provides support and services to children who can't live with their parents because of abuse or neglect. It also supports kinship carers.

**Child Protection Helpline – [www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/protecting-children](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/protecting-children) or 132 111**

Call this number to report a child or young person at risk of harm from abuse or neglect. The Helpline is staffed by professionally qualified caseworkers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Connecting Carers NSW – [www.connectingcarersnsw.com.au](http://www.connectingcarersnsw.com.au) or 1300 794 653**

This organisation supports foster, kinship and relative carers across New South Wales.

**Legal Aid NSW – [www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au) or 1300 888 529**

Legal Aid NSW helps disadvantaged clients across New South Wales with legal problems in most areas of criminal, family and civil law.

**Mirabel Foundation – [www.mirabelfoundation.org.au](http://www.mirabelfoundation.org.au) or (03) 9527 9422**

This organisation helps children who are orphaned or abandoned because of parental illicit drug use and who are now in the care of extended family. Mirabel runs kinship carer support groups in New South Wales.

**Parent Line NSW – [www.parentline.org.au](http://www.parentline.org.au) or 1300 130 052**

Parent Line NSW is a confidential telephone advice and information service for parents and carers of children aged 0-18 years. Trained professional counsellors offer support and information.

**Samaritans – [www.samaritans.org.au/service/kinship-care-grandparents-as-parents](http://www.samaritans.org.au/service/kinship-care-grandparents-as-parents) or (02) 4969 7886**

This organisation offers training, workshops and peer support groups for kinship carers.

## Northern Territory

**Carer Community – [www.carercommunity.nt.gov.au](http://www.carercommunity.nt.gov.au) or 1800 814 599**

Visit this website or call the helpline to find out about becoming a grandparent or kinship carer in the Northern Territory. The website also has resources and information for carers.

**NT Child Abuse Hotline – [www.nt.gov.au/law/crime/report-child-abuse](http://www.nt.gov.au/law/crime/report-child-abuse) or 1800 700 250**

Call this number to report a child or young person at risk of harm from abuse or neglect.

**NT Legal Aid Commission – [www.ntlac.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntlac.nt.gov.au) or 1800 019 343**

The Legal Aid Helpline helps NT residents understand legal problems and options. The service is available regardless of financial circumstances.

**Parentline – [www.parentline.com.au](http://www.parentline.com.au) or 1300 301 300**

This confidential telephone counselling service offers free professional counselling and support for parents and carers.

## Queensland

**Child safety service centres – [www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/about-us/contact-us/child-safety-service-centres](http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/about-us/contact-us/child-safety-service-centres)**

These centres ensure children's safety and wellbeing and work to prevent children from being harmed. Contact a local centre to report a child at risk. After hours, call 1800 177 135.

**Foster Care Queensland – [www.fcq.com.au](http://www.fcq.com.au) or call (07) 3256 6166**

This child protection organisation supports children and young people in foster or kinship care.

**Grandparents Information – [www.grandparentsqld.com.au](http://www.grandparentsqld.com.au) or call 1300 135 500**

This telephone information service provides information about support groups for grandparent carers. The website also has an information resource directory for grandparents in Queensland.

**Legal Aid Queensland – [www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/Home](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/Home) or 1300 651 188**

Legal Aid Queensland offers advice to financially disadvantaged Queenslanders about criminal, family and civil law matters.

**Parentline – [www.parentline.com.au](http://www.parentline.com.au) or 1300 301 300**

This confidential telephone counselling service offers free professional counselling and support for parents and carers.





## South Australia

**Child Abuse Report Line – [www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse](http://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse) or 131 478**

Call this number to report a child or young person at risk of harm from abuse or neglect.

**Connecting Foster & Kinship Carers SA – [www.cfc-sa.org.au](http://www.cfc-sa.org.au) or call 1800 732 272**

This is the peak body for foster and kinship carers in South Australia. It provides support and services to children, young people and carer families.

**Grandparents for Grandchildren SA – [www.gfgsa.com.au](http://www.gfgsa.com.au) or call (08) 8212 1937**

This community service organisation provides a range of services to grandparents who are worried about the welfare of their grandchildren. It also supports grandparents by providing practical and emotional support and referral services.

**Legal Services Commission of South Australia – [www.lsc.sa.gov.au](http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au) or 1300 366 424**

The Commission provides free legal advice and assistance through its telephone advice line and face-to-face appointments.

**Parent Helpline – [www.decd.sa.gov.au/parenting-and-child-care/parenting/parenting-sa/parent-information-and-support](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/parenting-and-child-care/parenting/parenting-sa/parent-information-and-support) or 1300 364 100**

This is a confidential telephone information service for parents and carers with children aged 0-12 years.

## Tasmania

**Child Safety Services - [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child\\_protection\\_services](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child_protection_services) or 1300 737 639**

Call this number to report a child or young person at risk of harm from abuse or neglect.

**Foster and Kinship Carers Association Tasmania – [www.fkat.org.au](http://www.fkat.org.au) or call 1800 149 994**

This organisation offers support and information to foster carers, kinship carers and people interested in becoming carers.

**Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania – [www.legalaid.tas.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.tas.gov.au) or 1300 366 611**

The Commission offers free legal advice over the phone, as well as free face-to-face advice at its legal clinics.

**Parent Line – [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service\\_information/children\\_and\\_families/parentline](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service_information/children_and_families/parentline) or 1300 808 178**

This telephone information and support service helps parents and carers with stressful parenting issues and concerns.

## Victoria

**Child Protection – [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/child-protection-contacts](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/child-protection-contacts)**

Call a local child protection service to report a child at risk of neglect or abuse. After hours, call the Child Protection Emergency Service on 131 278.

**Kinship Carers Victoria – [www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org](http://www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org) or (03) 9372 2422**

Kinship Carers Victoria provides support for kinship and grandparent carers across Victoria.

**Mirabel Foundation – [www.mirabelfoundation.org.au](http://www.mirabelfoundation.org.au) or (03) 9527 9422**

This organisation helps children who are orphaned or abandoned because of parental illicit drug use and who are now in the care of extended family.

**Victoria Legal Aid – [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au) or 1300 792 387**

This service provides free legal information and advice.

**Parentline Victoria – [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/parentline.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/parentline.aspx) or 132 289**

This is a telephone counselling service for parents and carers of children aged 0-18 years. Professional counsellors can help with a wide range of parenting issues.

## Western Australia

**Department for Child Protection and Family Support – [www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx) or 1800 622 258**

Call this number with concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

**Legal Aid WA – [www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/Pages/Default.aspx](http://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/Pages/Default.aspx) or 1300 650 579**

Legal Aid offers information and a range of legal services, particularly for disadvantaged people.

**Mission Australia – [www.missionaustralia.com.au](http://www.missionaustralia.com.au) or (08) 9225 0400 (WA state office)**

This organisation supports grandparent and kinship carers.

**Ngala – [www.ngala.com.au](http://www.ngala.com.au) or 1800 111 546**

This organisation helps parents, grandparents and carers develop skills and cope with the challenges of parenting.

**Wanslea Grandcare – [www.wanslea.asn.au/children-and-family/grandcare](http://www.wanslea.asn.au/children-and-family/grandcare) or 1800 008 323**

This agency provides information and support to grandparent carers in Perth and southern Western Australia.